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Executive Registry

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

THROUGH : Deputy Director for Support

SUBJECT : A Senior Seminar on National Intelligence

REFERENCE : Memo frm D/OP to Ex. Dir. -Compt.,  
dtd 16 Sep 70, subj: A Senior School for  
the Agency

1. Mr. Wattles's persuasive suggestion closely parallels our thinking in the Office of Training: we have been at work on a proposal much like his for several weeks. An ad hoc committee of the School Chiefs of OTR and others is busy identifying the problems and working up possible solutions, in the hope that the Agency will give sufficient support to the idea for us to be able to offer a genuinely senior seminar of broad scope and duration as early as the autumn of 1971.

2. I had not intended to surface the idea until I could describe it more precisely; for the moment let me say that I think Wattles's memorandum identifies a real and important need. My own proposal will differ somewhat from his. It would lead to the eventual creation of a Senior Seminar on National Intelligence, which while principally devoted to the needs of CIA would also take in senior representatives of the Departments of State and Defense and would come to be the intelligence counterpart of the senior war colleges.

3. Something like this was in the back of my head when, in January 1969 before becoming Director of Training, I showed a list of suggestions to Mr. Bannerman and Mr. Helms. Since then we have moved in the direction of intensified training for mid-level old hands by developing two successful new courses: the Advanced Intelligence Seminar and the Advanced Operations Course. Both courses profit greatly from having the carefully selected students help educate each other. I believe we are now in a position to develop the same approach to substantive in-house training for prospective executives from all over the Agency.

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4. Among current reasons for proposing this development are these:

a. OTR has for some time been bothered by the problem you recently raised with respect to the Midcareer Course. Your note of 23 September arrived at a time when we were preparing to recommend that the Midcareer Course be with few exceptions limited to students under forty years of age. More on this soon.

b. This year's nominations for the senior war colleges and other external training brought two growing problems into sharp focus--(1) the Agency is nominating a far larger number of highly qualified officers than can be accommodated and (2) in general, it is nominating older men than those who would probably receive most benefit from the particular external opportunities available. On the first point the Training Selection Board could only regretfully reject many qualified candidates, with the feeling that they nevertheless deserve opportunities for appropriate senior training. On the second, the Board's decision to stick to the age limits set by the schools themselves caused the rejection of a number of otherwise highly qualified applicants on grounds of age alone. More on this soon too.

5. These current concerns, along with the preparation for succession emphasized by Wattles, impel recognition that the Agency needs a new approach to training for carefully selected men and women in their forties who are still growing in their jobs. For such people a good course would be a real opportunity, precisely at the time when their grasp of intelligence problems is most likely to need broadening and deepening beyond their previously parochial experience.



HUGH T. CUNNINGHAM  
Director of Training

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